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ELLIS R. KERLEY
. . . member of Mengele team

U-Md. Teacher A Veteran in Detective Work

By Desiree F. Hicks
Washington Post Staff Writer

Ellis R. Kerley, a professor of anthropology at the University of Maryland and a member of the forensic team investigating the skeleton believed to be that of Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele, is no stranger to detective work.

In 1954 in Kokura, Japan, Kerley helped identify bodies killed in the Korean War, according to a university spokesman. More recently, in 1980, Kerley was called upon to identify the eight U.S. crewmen who were killed during a foiled rescue attempt of the 53 American hostages who were being held in Iran.

Despite the fact that his work can be "fairly grim," Kerley's wife Mary said yesterday from the couple's University Park home that her husband is "dreadfully pleased with his work."

Kerley is one of 17 forensic specialists working in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Kerley, 60, joined the university's staff in 1972 and is a former chairman of the anthropology department.

Mary Kerley said that she could not discuss how long her husband has been working on the Mengele case, but that his involvement was "not recent."

In addition to working with the FBI and the CIA, she said that her husband has had a "long relationship with police and sheriffs around the country," helping them to identify missing children and bodies that have been found along roads.

While Ellis Kerley has worked on a number of cases that have taken on a national and international scope, each case he takes on "is most important at that time," Mary Kerley said.

Kerley began work as an anthropologist in 1950 at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, N.C., where he was a staff anthropologist for the department of medical genetics. He received his BS degree from the University of Kentucky in 1950 and later, a PhD from the University of Michigan.

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